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16 August 1968

The Honorable Richard Helms
Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Mr. Helms:

Enclosed herewith is the Report of General Lauris Norstad, Dr. Eugene Fubini, Ambassador Livingston T. Merchant and the undersigned responsive to the Terms of Reference of 11 September 1967. The following reflects, in very general terms, its findings and recommendations.

1. There is need for a long-range National Intelligence Plan within which periodic guidance can be provided to assure that the most effective resources are available and used to meet the present and foreseeable requirements of the United States Government.

2. Guidance must be target-oriented and relate the value of information received to the particular resources which produced it.

3. The creation of the National Intelligence Resources Board and the broadening of the programming and planning staff of the Director of Central Intelligence should be helpful in providing both such a long-range plan and the required periodic guidance.

4. There is need for a point of central review within the Department of Defense where all intelligence programs, including COMINT and ELINT, are looked at as a whole. Otherwise, as targets multiply both in numbers and sophistication, the magnitude of the effort will reach unacceptable proportions. In the reduction, the most effective resources may suffer along with the least.

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NRO and DIA review(s) completed.

JCS and OSD review(s) completed.

NSA review(s) completed.

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5. There must be authoritative management over each of the several COMINT and ELINT programs.

6. Authority of the Director, National Security Agency, over all COMINT resources must be reaffirmed and clarified, including his authority over the Service Cryptologic Agencies as to all COMINT resources within their control. He should have the right to enter objections to the inclusion within the Service Cryptologic Agencies of other resources to the extent they would detract from the major mission of the Agencies in carrying out the NSA mission.

7. The Director, NSA, should strengthen his programming and planning staff by including more high-level military and civilian personnel from other agencies having expertise in the cryptologic area. In this connection, consideration should be given to integrating the programming and planning staffs of the Service Cryptologic Agencies into NSA. Military tours of duty at NSA should be extended and the establishment of career opportunities for military cryptologists within the Armed Forces should be encouraged.

8. The removal of resources by the military from the control of NSA should be discontinued. This will only be successful if the military can be assured that the COMINT resources developed by NSA will effectively perform in both the Direct Service and Direct Support roles.

9. The overall centralization of ELINT resources within NSA as contemplated by the Security Council Directive of 1959 is neither workable nor necessary, and the Directive should be amended accordingly. This is essential if the present confusion and duplication of ELINT resources is to be eliminated and avoided in the future.

10. Those ELINT resources essential in providing radar order of battle and conducting electronic warfare should be designated, assigned to, and programmed by the Services and included within their several budgets.

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11. Those ELINT resources not falling within these classifications should be managed by the National Security Agency. There should be placed within the Services only those ELINT resources which provide information which cannot adequately be supplied by the National Security Agency. The several types of ELINT are not subject to exact definition but decisions can and should be made on a case-by-case basis. Some duplication will, and probably should, result.

12. The NSA should provide, and the Services should use, the training, technical and other support facilities essential to the operation of military ELINT resources within their control.

13. The management, collection and processing of satellite ELINT is generally satisfactory. Some clarifications in the directive establishing the National Reconnaissance Office are suggested to reflect currently satisfactory practices.

14. An effort should be made by NSA and NRO to eliminate the least efficient ELINT satellite payloads and more importantly, to ascertain whether some substantial part of ground, sea and air efforts cannot be eliminated with the increasing effectiveness of satellite collection.

15. Authority over the tasking, collection and processing of satellite COMINT and Telemetry should be definitely placed within the NSA as these satellites become effective.

16. The present effort to consolidate and close overseas bases should be encouraged and extended. Caution should be exercised not to abandon, voluntarily, any area of the world for reasons of economy, if they may one day become important again, and once abandoned cannot be re-entered. Caution must also be exercised in returning second-echelon processing to the US to ensure that military requirements, both present and future, will not suffer.

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17. The management of [redacted] is generally satisfactory, except with respect to the technical and tasking authority of NSA which must be more fully recognized and utilized.

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19. No firm recommendations have been made with respect to either the [redacted] programs.

In conclusion, there must be no slackening in the US cryptologic effort if essential military and other national needs are to be met. The task of the future will be to determine those resources best calculated to meet the growing requirements and to assure their efficient management.

This Report could not have been prepared without the unfailing, indefatigable and, above all, understanding effort of [redacted]

Unfortunately, many of its recommendations do not meet with their equal enthusiasm.

Enclosure: a/s

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GENERAL COMMENTS

1. A re-evaluation of the COMINT and ELINT efforts of the US Government is appropriate because of developments in the more than fifteen years since the establishment of the present organization for the management of COMINT and in the ten years since ELINT was placed in the same framework.
2. The vast increase in signals subject to interception, the rapid advance in the technology for interception from the ground, air, sea and space, the new geographic areas of interest to the intelligence community, give rise to new problems in the programming of requirements and the provision of resources to meet them, now and for the foreseeable future.
3. The intelligence community is generally satisfied with the quality of the product, its dissemination, the technical competence of personnel and the maintenance and modernization of resources.
4. There are problems, however, with respect to several aspects of COMINT and ELINT. These problems, together with suggestions as to how they may be met, are set forth below.

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